Letters to the Editor

Strike Ballot

With reference to the action taken by the B.C. Government Employees Association on Friday morning the following questions are being asked by the thinking public:

1. What was the result pro and con of the strike ballot.
2. Why is it that the strike ballot sent to the civil servants did not include the issue of collective bargaining, and the tabling of the Carrothers Report?

It is apparent from the ballot that the only issue at stake was a matter of wages, and the wage schedule as approved appears to be more than generous.

As the moral issue involved in this strike was strictly that of wages and not that of collective bargaining, or the tabling of the Carrothers report, those employees who saw fit to cross the picket line should be commended for their clear-sightedness in following the dictates of their conscience.

H. T. SCOTT.

Royal Oak, B.C.

Unfair Slight

I would like to reply to a letter appearing in your paper March 13, over the signature of J. M. Thomas, RR4, Victoria. The letter does not concern any particular company of which I have knowledge, but is an unfair slight against the B.C. insurance industry in general.

An excerpt reads: "In the same way the people of B.C. exercise their right to pay double or more premium costs for auto insurance for an inferior type of coverage."

Firstly, Mr. Thomas is of the mistaken opinion that auto rates are levied on a provincial basis. This is not so; they are based upon local road conditions and driving habits as they affect losses. Provincial boundaries in themselves, except in Saskatchewan where driver and non-driver alike pay for the subsidized state insurance, have no bearing on the rate structure. It is interesting to note that Victoria has at present one of the most favorable rates in Canada, and the lowest in B.C.

Mr. Thomas' remark that inferior coverage is provided in B.C., is unfounded and ill-advised. Auto policies are written on a standard form in most provinces and provide uniform coverage. It is therefore difficult to understand the reasoning behind this remark. No doubt Mr. Thomas also finds his ludicrous statement difficult to understand—and impossible to explain.

L. ALAN ROPER,
Federated Mutual District Mgr.

Victoria, B.C.

Who Was Flying?

Unless I'm blind, I can assure you there was a jet aircraft in the Victoria vicinity on Tuesday morning.

I was taking a walk with my dog when the jet passed over us. I was at the time in Byron Street and it was around 10.30 a.m. The blast occurred a few seconds before I noticed the plane.

If it is not an USAF or RCAF aircraft, who is flying or what's the DEW line doing?

Now, was the plane the cause of the blast? This I am not able to tell.

M. FOISNET.

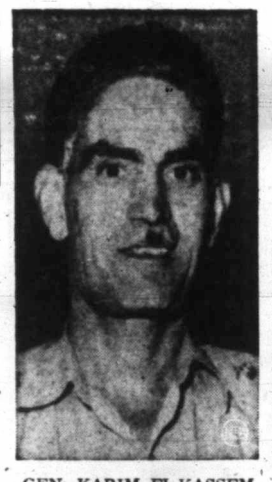
1569 Foul Bay Road.

Not the Same

I, Raymond F. Barrett, of 954 Townsite Road, Nanaimo, B.C., also of 884 Royal Oak Avenue, Victoria, am not the Raymond Barrett who was mentioned in the press of March 2, being involved in a traffic violation.

R. F. BARRETT.

884 Royal Oak Avenue.



GEN. KARIM EL-KASSEM

★ ★ ★

Darling of Whites

Courts Negroes

Sir Roy Walks the Tightrope

By DAN KURZMAN
North American Newspaper Alliance

Without publicizing the fact, Sir Roy Welensky, prime minister of the riot-torn federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland is eliminating some segregation "pinpricks" in his territory.

"After all," he told this reporter, "I'm a Jew. I understand the problem of racial discrimination. But this problem cannot be solved overnight."

The "pinpricks" the federation leader is removing are signs reading, "For Europeans Only." They are quietly being taken down from the entrances to post offices and other public buildings.

Nevertheless, many observers believe Sir Roy is not doing nearly enough to soothe the tempers of federation Negroes. These last few weeks they have been rioting in Nyasaland, where a state of emergency now exists.

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The future of white-Negro relations in the federation rests more with Sir Roy than with any other man. He has the grin, gait and bulging build of a department store Santa Claus, and his personality is hardly less engagaing. His mellow, moderate manner even extends to calling the apartheid leaders of the Union of South Africa "extremists."

"Actually, we are moving in the opposite direction," he said.

This may be true but only in a very limited sense. Sir Roy currently is the darling of Southern Rhodesia's white supremacists and if his policy is for the advancement of the Negro it is moving forward almost imperceptibly. This is what keeps his white followers happy.

The prime minister justifies the snail-like pace of political reform with the argument that "economic advancement must precede political advancement. Once we close the gap economically, political progress will come automatically. Political rights must be earned."

It is literally true that political rights "must be earned" in Southern Rhodesia. A Negro, to qualify as a voter in a federal election, must earn $2,000 a year, enough to keep all but a few thousand off the electrol rolls. In regional elections, voting requirements have been periodically raised to keep them unattainable by the vast majority of Africans.

Moreover, no great effort is being made to facilitate the African economic advancement of which Sir Roy speaks. For example, white unions will not permit Africans to become engineers, nor will they allow Africans to hold any but the most menial jobs in the rich copper mines.

The majority of the whites in Southern Rhodesia look favorably on the apartheid policies in the Union of South Africa, and they point out approvingly that there are no race riots there.

Pointers Seen

Iraq Veers Left

By JAY G. HAYDEN
North American Newspaper Alliance

The civil war in Iraq is directly attributable to a shake-up by Gen. Karim el-Kassem of his cabinet last month, close after sentencing to death Abdel Salam Aref, co-hero of the revolution last summer.

The significance of the cabinet revision, changing eight ministerial posts, was its total elimination of the Baath (Socialist) and Istiqlal (right wing) parties. Both of these figured in the July revolution although for different reasons. The Baath party hated King Faisal's government because of its conservative and dictatorial facets. The Istiqlal group was devoted to Arab nationalism, typified by President Nasser.

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Most of the new cabinet members are army officers without identifiable party leanings, but a steady rise in Communist activities is reported in Iraq.

A host of Communist nations all at once sent ambassadors to Baghdad, most of whom proceeded to announce new trade agreements with Iraq. Coincidentally Iraqi news bulletins, mostly trivial in content, began to appear in newspapers and on the air waves in Russia, China and other Communist countries, to the exclusion of more important developments.

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Most emphasized of all was Karim el-Kassem's organization of a semi-military organization, called "Friends of the Republic," similar to Adolf Hitler's "Brownshirts." This group was formed when Colonel Aref tried to rush Iraq into union with Nasser's United Arab Republic. It whopped it up again against Aref while his trial was going on before a so-called "peoples' court"—marked by many of the trappings of Communism.

Coincidentally, the Iraqi press and radio developed a flood of Communist propaganda and many Communist tracts appeared in the Baghdad bookstalls.

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Through all this many westerners have remained hopeful—chiefly, it appears, because the Iraqi government has behaved toward foreign oil companies with great correctness, maintaining production without a hitch and declaring its intention to abide by all agreements.

The British particularly have emphasized the latter condition, accompanied by the prediction that if ever Mr. Nasser gets his hands on their oil wells they quickly will go the same way as the once British-French owned and operated Suez Canal.

Doctors Issue Warning to Elderly Women

Tranquilizer Dangers Stressed

By DELOS SMITH
United Press International

Two physicians with three sad experiences believe the rate for dangerous complications from the newest family of tranquilizing drugs is one in 150 when given on a long-terms basis to elderly women. This, they said, was "prohibitively high."

Drs. John M. Fiore and Francis M. Noonan of New York also complained that drug-makers were making so many varieties of tranquilizers from the one basic drug that "the physician is often lulled into a false sense of security with each drug, and the dreaded complication of blood dyscrasia (disorder) is all too often forgotten or minimized."

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The basic drug is phenothiazine which was used chiefly by veterinarians to worm animals before it was found to have the power to tranquilize people when its molecule was altered by additions and subtractions of specific atoms.

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Elderly women probably are tranquilized more frequently than any other class. There are so many of them, and so many are untranquil. Fiore and Noonan had sad experiences with three of them after they had been taking a phenothiazine derivative for months.

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The three were taken to hospital in grave condition from the blood disorder called agranulocytosis which can be, but rarely is, caused by certain drugs in persons who are individually susceptible in poorly understood ways. Women are known to be more susceptible than men. One of the aged women died. The other two recovered after long "stormy" illnesses.

All this caused the physicians to check up on the medical literature which has given the phenothiazine tranquilizers "their widespread acceptance" among doctors. Fiore and Noonan found that this literature was contradictory.

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One group of doctors who tested the drugs before they were released for general prescribing reported results which placed the chances of the complication of agranulocytosis appearing in any given patient, as one in 100,000. Another group reported that the chances were as high as one in 150.

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Fiore and Noonan made a consensus of all the results and found that the extremely safe ratio of one in 100,000 applied only to patients who had been carefully selected and who received the tranquilizer for short periods. They suggested that the true ratio for all types of patients probably was around one in 700.

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But for elderly women who take the tranquilizers longer than two months, "the rate may be prohibitively high, approaching about 1 in 150," they said in their report to the New England Journal of Medicine.

They said they believed "the production of the agranulocytic state is inherent" in the molecule of the basic drug, phenothiazine. The atoms which are added or subtracted in making derivatives, "may also play a significant part in altering the incidence" of the complication, one way or the other.

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POWER WILL BE OFF in McTavish Road Area, North Saanich, Monday Afternoon

Electric service will be interrupted in part of North Saanich Monday, March 16, from approximately 1.30 to 2.30 p.m., while the distribution system in the area is converted from 4,000 to 12,000 volts.

The area affected will be: East Saanich Road from Bazan Bay Road to Dickson Avenue and all side streets; McTavish Road from Mainwaring Road to West Saanich Road and all side streets; all of Cresswell Road.

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